



Roberte the Deuyll.
A
METRICAL ROMANCE,
FROM AN
Ancient Illuminated Manuscript.



LONDON:
PRINTED FOR I. HERBERT.

1798.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS MS. of ROBERT THE DEVIL appears to have been transcribed, word for word, from an edition in quarto printed either by *Wynken de Worde* or *Pynson*, of which I have seen a fragment consisting of six leaves; these have been collated with the MS.

No mention is made of this edition in Mr. Herbert's *Typographical Antiquities*.^{*} Nor have I ever seen a complete copy or heard of one: it is probable that the impression was destroyed in the fire of London. There are no cuts in the fragment. The Drawings in the MS. seem to be of the time of Elizabeth or James I.

The MS. was formerly in the possession of Mr. Radcliffe.

I. H.

^{*} Though in p. 227 and 228 is given a transcript of the heads of the chapters, from an edition in the Public Library Cambridge, apparently in prose, coinciding exactly in matter with this.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS MS. of *Romeo and Juliet* appears to have been transcribed word for word from an edition in quarto printed either by W. I. or J. W. of which I have seen a fragment containing the leaves; these have been collated with the MS. No mention is made of this edition in Mr. Herbert's *Typographical Antiquities*. Nor have I ever seen a complete copy or heard of one: it is probable that the impression was destroyed in the fire of London. There are no cuts in the margins. The Dedicatory is the MS. seems to be of the time of Elizabeth or James I. The MS. was formerly in the possession of

Mr. Rawlinson.

A. B.

* Though in a very ancient volume, the handwriting of the hands of the scribe, from mention in the title, I think certainly appears to be, certainly nearly in manner with this.





THE
LYFE
OF
Roberte the Deuyll.

LYSTEN lordinges that of marueyles
lyke to heare
Of actes that were done sometyme in dede
By oure elders that before vs were
How some in myscheiffe their lyfe dyd leade
And in this boke may ye se yf that ye will rede
Of one Robert the deuyll, borne in Normandye
That was as uengeable a man as myght treade
On goddes grounde for he delyted all in tyranye.
A A Duke

The Life of

A Duke sometyme in Normandy there was
 Full uertuous and deuoute in all hys lyuynge
 And in almofe dedes, he yede in the waye of grace
 Of knyghtlye maners, and manfull in iustynge
 A Lordlye parfone, also courtes in euery thyng
 Hys dwellynge was at Nauerne vpon fayne
 At Chryftmas to honoure that holy tyme
 Open houfholde he kepte, and to please God was
 [fayne.

A feaste he helde vpon a certayne daye
 Lordes come thither of greate renowne
 And as they fate at dyner a knyght gan faye
 Vnto the Duke, and on hys knees kneled downe
 My lorde he fayd ye be owner of many a towne
 Yet haue ye no lady, nor none heyre
 After your dayes to reioyce youre grounde
 Therfore gett youe a princes that ys yonge and fayre.

Wyueles longe faid the duke haue I taryed
 And lyued sole withoute any mate
 I fe well yt ys youre wyll that I shoulde be maryed
 But yet woulde I haue one to myne estate
 Accordynge, for and I shoulde take
 A Lady of nobler bloude than I am
 Or else of lower degre, soone shoulde I forsake
 Myne owne worship, and lyue lyke no man.

Yf

Roberte the Deuyll.

3

Yf I shoulde nowe wedde, and after repent
And lyue in sorowe and greate langoure
Than myght I saye that fortune had me sent
A chaunce mysfortunate, distaynyng the floure
Of noble fame that shoulde encrease myne honour
Wherefore lordes all, accordinge to prudence—
A foresight sayeth Salomon ys worthe treasure
Yet be ye ruled by fortune a Lady of excellence.

Than sayde to the Duke a Baron right bolde
My lorde I beseke youre grace of audyence
The Duke bade hym than saye what he woulde
In Burgonye sayd the Baron ys a ladye of reuerence
Daughter to the Earle, yf yt please youre magnyfi-
Her for to take, there wyll no man saye naye [cence
Than to hys wordes the Duke gave credence
And sayde I knowe well the Earles doughter that lady
[gaye

In processe that lady to the Duke was maryed
A feaste was made of greate solempnytye
And twelue yeares together they taryed
In wealth and greate prosperytye
Goddess lawe they kepte and lyued vertuouslye
Yet chylde together had they none
They prayed to god with heart deuoutlye
Yf yt pleased hym for to sende them one.

The Life of

Euer they prayed, but yt woulde not be
 In twelue yeare, chylde had they none
 Good dedes they dyd, and gaue almose plentye
 Alacke said thys Ladye shall I lyve alone
 Ofte she syghed and made greate mone
 That no chylde on her body woulde sprynge
 The good Duke also ever dyd grone
 And sayed good Jesu yet heare my cryenge

Lorde sende me a chylde the worlde to multiplye
 The Duke sayde, yf it be thy wyll
 My wyfe soroweth in her partye
 I feare that she wyll her selfe spyll
 Nothinge to the lorde that ys vnpossyble
 Nowe heare my prayer for loue of thy mother
 Sende me a chylde my petycion to fullfyll
 For to be myrry I desyre none other.

And on a tyme the Duke and Duches walked
 In a garden by them selfe alone
 Eche of them complayned and to other talked
 Howe they could haue no chylde, and made much
 Full greate, and saide joy have we none [mone ;
 I curse them saide the Duke that made the maryage
 For I had leuer to have lyued styll alone
 Chylde have I none, to reioyce myne herytage.
 And





Roberte the Deuyll.

5

And said yf I had be maryed to another ladye
I knowe that I shoulde haue had chyldren ynowe
The Duches aunswered as for her partye
Yf I had chaunged, verylye I trowe [youe
That chyldern I shoulde haue had; none haue I by
Let vs thanke god of that he doth vs sende
For I beleue and do verelye trowe
That all oure sorowe he may yt amende.

So on a morowe the Duke went on huntynge
Hys hearte was fullfylled all with thought
In hys mynde chydde, and agayne god grudgyng
He fighed fore inwardlye and ofte
If he myght haue dyed, nothyng he rought
And sayde god loueth not me, all in dyspayre
Many women haue chyldren : but myne nought
Alas I trowe I shall have none to be myne heyre

The fende tempted soore the Duke tho
That he wyft not what to do nor saye
He left huntynge and homewarde he dyd go
And in to hys chaumber he toke the waye
So there the Duches at the same tyme laye
In as greate trouble as her husbande was
And to her lorde saide no chylde I beare maye
I am vnhappye, and therewith sayde alas.

He

\ He toke her in hys armes and her kyfte
 And of that Lady he had all his pleasure
 And so begate a chylde; and yt not wyfte
 The Duke to oure Lorde made hys prayer
 For to sende hym a chylde for to gladde hys chere
 The ladye saide the Deuyll now sende vs one
 For god wyll not oure petycion heare
 Therefore I trowe power hath he none

She sayde yf I be conceyued this houre nowe
 I geve yt to the deuyll both soule and bodye
 Lo thys lady was nere folyfhe I trowe
 And fullfyllled with great obstynacye
 Her owne soule there she dyd put in ieopardye
 For that houre she dyd conceyve with a man chylde
 That whan he was borne lyued myscheuouflye
 In thefte and murder lyke a tyraunte wyld

The tyme drewe so that nyne monethes was past
 Than her tyme drewe on verye nye
 At the houre of byrth she laboured fast
 More than a moneth the boke doth specysye
 She had many throwes, with many a pytteous crye
 Ladyes prayed for her, and gaue almese dede
 They trowed verelye that she shoulde dye
 With that our ladye wolde her helpe and spede.

And

Roberte the Deuyll.

7

And alsone as Robert the deuyll was borne
The skyes waxed blacke that it was wonder
And sodenlye there began a full greate storme
Rayne lyghtenyng with horrible thonder
They feared that the house would ryue a sonder
Then blewe the wynde with greate power
That they wende the dome had he comen there
For downe wente wyndowes and euery doore.

Halfe the house the deuyll pulled downe
Yet at the last the wether waxed cleare
So for dreade thys lady laye in a fowne
That greate wetherynge she dyd fore feare ;
Her gentlewomen bade her be of good chere
They told her that the wather was gone and past
Then to the churche the chylde they dyd beare.
And chryftened yt Robert at the last.

He was as bygge the same daye
As some chylde of twelue monethes olde
When they came from Churche he cryed all the
That yt made many hym to beholde [ways
Men sate the chylde loked very bolde
Hys teeth grewe fast when that he shoulde foucke
The noryshe nypples so harde byte he woulde
That yt went then to her verye hearte roote.

There

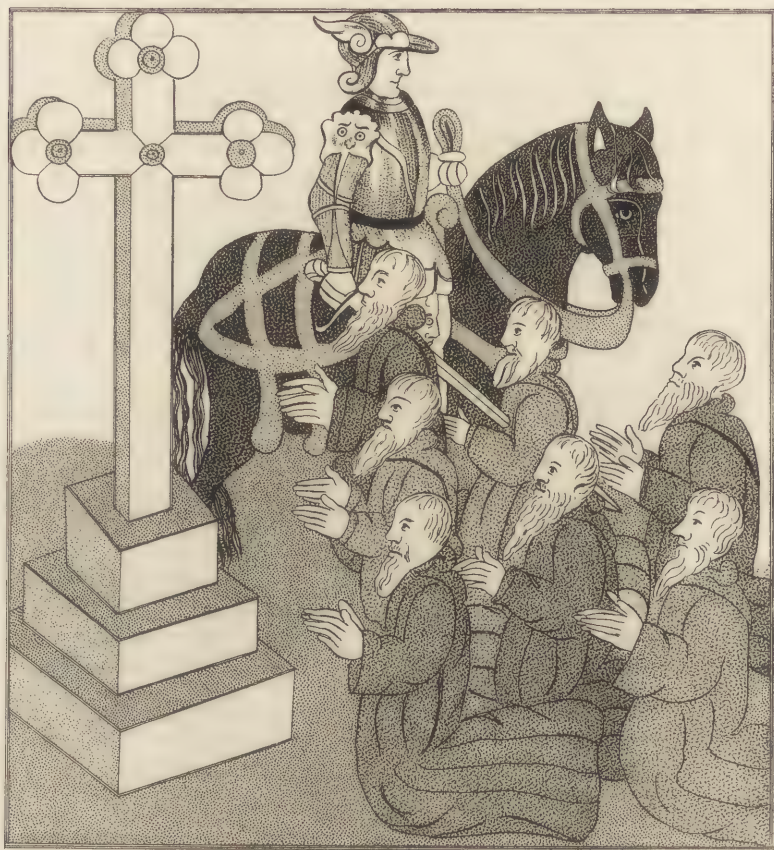
There durst no woman geue hym suck in faye
 For hys teeth grewe so peryllouslye
 That the noryshe nypples be bote a waye
 But than they woulde no more byde the ieopardye
 So with an horne he was fedde trewlye
 At the years ende he could bothe go and speake
 The elder he waxed, the more vnhappye
 Shrewdnes he woulde do bothe in house and streate

Hurte would he do to woman and man
 Vngracious was he daye and nyght
 Yf he amonge any chyldren came
 He woulde them hurte both scratche and byte
 Caste stones at theyr heades and fyght
 Breake their shynnes and put some eyes oute
 Lordes and ladyes of hym had greate delyght
 And wende yt had ben but wantonnes withoute
 [doute.

Mennes chyldren there he dyd muche harme
 Of them he hurte shrewdelye many a one
 Breake bothe legge headde and arme
 Therefore he was beloued of none
 Hys companye chyldren forfoke everychone
 They dyd flee fro him as the deuyll fro holy water
 We wyll not haue hym amonge vs to come
 They sayd and he never do ; we be gladder.

For





Roberte the Deuyll.

9

For and the chyldern had seen hym come
In to the strete there for to playe
They woulde take theyr legges, and away runne
To theyr fathers as faste as they maye
Roberte the Deuyll dothe come they would saye
For yonge chyldren gave him that name
The chyldren hydde them in corners euery daye
And to runne from hym they woulde leaue theyr game.

And whan that he was aboute feuen yeare of aege
Hys father sette hym to scole in dede
With a dyscrete man and a sage
And prayed hys sonne that he would spede
For to learne both to wryte and reade
And to Roberte the deuyll hys father sayde
Sonne, yf thy lyfe in vertue thoue leade
Than wyll I with the be right well a payed.

Robert the Deuyll wente to scole a lytell space
And euer he thought yt to longe ywys
He learned so that he was past all grace
Yt happened at the last he dyd amyffe
Hys mafter sayde Syr youe muste amende thys
Or elles forsothe ye shalbe beate
He sayde yf thou smyte me I wyll make the wyshe
That thou thyne owne fleshe rather had eate.

B

Naye

Naye fayde hys master ye be to bolde
 And toke a rodde for to chaste hym soone,
 So to beate hym he fayde that he woulde
 Roberte sawe what he purposed to done
 And fayde ye were better lette me a lone
 For with a dagger he thrust hym in to the bellye
 That the bloude ran downe in to hys shone
 So slewe hys master, and let hym deade lye.

Whan Robert the Deuyll sawe hys master fall
 He fayde he woulde go to scole no more
 Hys boke he threwe agaynst the wall
 The deuyll have the whyt that he was forye therfore
 Alacke he made hys fathers hearte soore
 When that hys master had slayne
 The Duches curfed the houre that he was bore
 She fayde of hys companye no man ys fayne.

After that there woulde no pryft hym teache
 He folowed uice, he woule be ruled by none
 And mocke pryftes whan they shoulde preache
 For and he into the church had gone
 He woulde skorne the clearkes euerychone
 And when they songe, come them behynde
 So threwe dust in theyr mowthes by one and one
 And some in theyr eyes to make them blynde.

Yf





Roberte the Deuill.

11

Yf he sawe any men or women deuoutlye knele
For to serue God with theyr prayer, or stande
Pryuelye behynde them woulde he steale
And geue them a fowce with hys hande
To cause some to yell out theyr tongues longe
Or els he woulde make theyr heades go to grounde
Theyr neckes he hurte fore he was so stronge
And many olde folkes he caused to founde.

Yt was vnpossible for a clarke to write
The dedes he dyd that weare full vengeable
Then gentlemen that weare sadde and dyscrete
Complayned to hys father withoute fable
The Duke sayde, to chaste hym I am not able
Than Robert was brought before hym
He sayde : Sonne, thy dedes ben reproueable
Thou shamest me and all thy hole kynne.

Thow doest all thyng that dyspleaseth god
Thy scolemaster thou slewest with a knyfe
Because that he woulde haue beate the with a rodde
To the prystes in churche thou doest muche greyfe
Full ofte I wyshe me oute of my lyfe
For thou of thy dedes arte so houghe and peryllouse
That chyl dren younge bothe mayde and wyfe
Whyche dothe the knowe geueth the theyr curse

All one with hym, in at the one eare and out at
He was neuer the better daye nor nyght [the other
Hys olde laye kept, he woulde do none other
He was neuer glad but when he dyd fyght
To fwere and lye, theryn he had great delyght
At last hys mother to her lorde spake
And sayd yt were best to make hym a knyght
Thys noble ordre let Robert the deuyll take.

For I trust then he wyll amende
Whan he that greate othe doth heare
Yt wyll make hym forye for that he dyd offende
And the workes of god hereafter for to leare
The Duke consented euen right there
And asked Robert yf he would lyue vnder awe
Of god, and the order of knight-hode beare
He aunswered I sett not thereby a strawe.

At the last Robert was made a knyght
Hys father bade him take hede of hys othe
To destroye wronge and to maynteyne right
And do trewe justyce for leefe or for lothe
For a knyght that in cheualrye goethe
Euer agaynst vice he must fyght
And supporte trewe maydens, and he so dothe
He ys an inherytoure of heaven, goddes own knyght.
Robert





Roberte the Deupll.

13

Robert aunswered, father at youre commandement
I wyll thys greate order vpon me take
But for to chaunge all myne entent
As for my manners I wyll not forsake
All men shall not ones me make
For to leaue my customes olde
I will contynewe and neuer wyll flake
Thoughe I therfore my lyfe lose shoulde.

The Duke caused a greate iustynge to be
Lordes came fro many a farre lande
And Ladyes also that runnyng to see
He that shoulde be moste doughtye of hande
There was many a knight full stronge
That thought theyr clothes of full greate pryce
Yet a gayne Roberte there myght none stande
As for worship by hym woulde none ryse.

A fylde was ordeyned bothe brode and wyde
With lystes fayre where they should runne
Tentes were pyght on euery syde
Greate was the people that thether come
The daye was fayre, hote shone the sonne [crye
Greate trumpets blewe, the herauldes made theyr
That euery knyght hys deuoure shoulde done
For to proue who was moste myghtye,

Knights

Knyghtes then dressed them to the fyelde
 In syluer armoure fayre and bright
 Barons doughtye with speare and shylde [lyght
 With helmes and haubreks that all the fyelde dyd
 Steedes in trappoure the was a goodlye fyght
 Speare heades that a strong cote woulde saylle
 Clothe of golde in harnes curyonflye pyght
 Worne of haburgin many a stronge mayle.

Roberte the deuyll came in as meke as a Lyon
 In his fyfte he had a greate speare
 Of fure wodde both toughe and longe
 Hys loke so grymme many men dyd feare
 Also that houghe staffe that he dyd beare
 Was almost as bygge as some twayne.
 Vnoccupied saide Robert why stand we here
 For to leaue all worke he woulde full fayne.

The Duke bade them all to begynne
 A fayre knyght then feutred hys speare
 In fayth sayde Robert I wyll run to hym
 And lyghtly turned hys greate stede theare
 Eche agayne other speares did beare
 Those coursers dyd runne, they smote in the fyelde
 Hartye were bothe, nought did they feare
 That knyght smote Robert fore in the shylde.

That

Roberte the Deurll.

15

That the stroke made Robert right wrothe
To him he thought to ryde agayne
He feutred hys speare, and forthe he gothe
With hys shyelde Robert mette playne
And stroke so soore that he smote it euen in twayne
And throughe the knyghtes shulder the speare dyd
I trowe therof Robert was fayne [runne
And asked yf any more woulde come.

Another knyght thought Robert to assaylle
So yode they together with greate raundone
Loth were they bothe for to fayle
And hastelye theyr steddes strongelye dyd runne
So swyfte with strenght Robert dyd come
That hys speare ran thorowe the knyghtes bodye
And to the earthe dead fell he downe
All men wondred of Robert trewlye.

The thyrde knyght to the grounde he smote
And brake hys horse backe a fonder
There was none that myght stande a stroke
Of hym that daye, nowe the people dyd wonder
To se that all knyghtes to hym were vnder
For so soore Robert dyd them assayle (thonder
A man had ben as good to haue be smytten with
As to haue a stroke of hys hand without faylle.

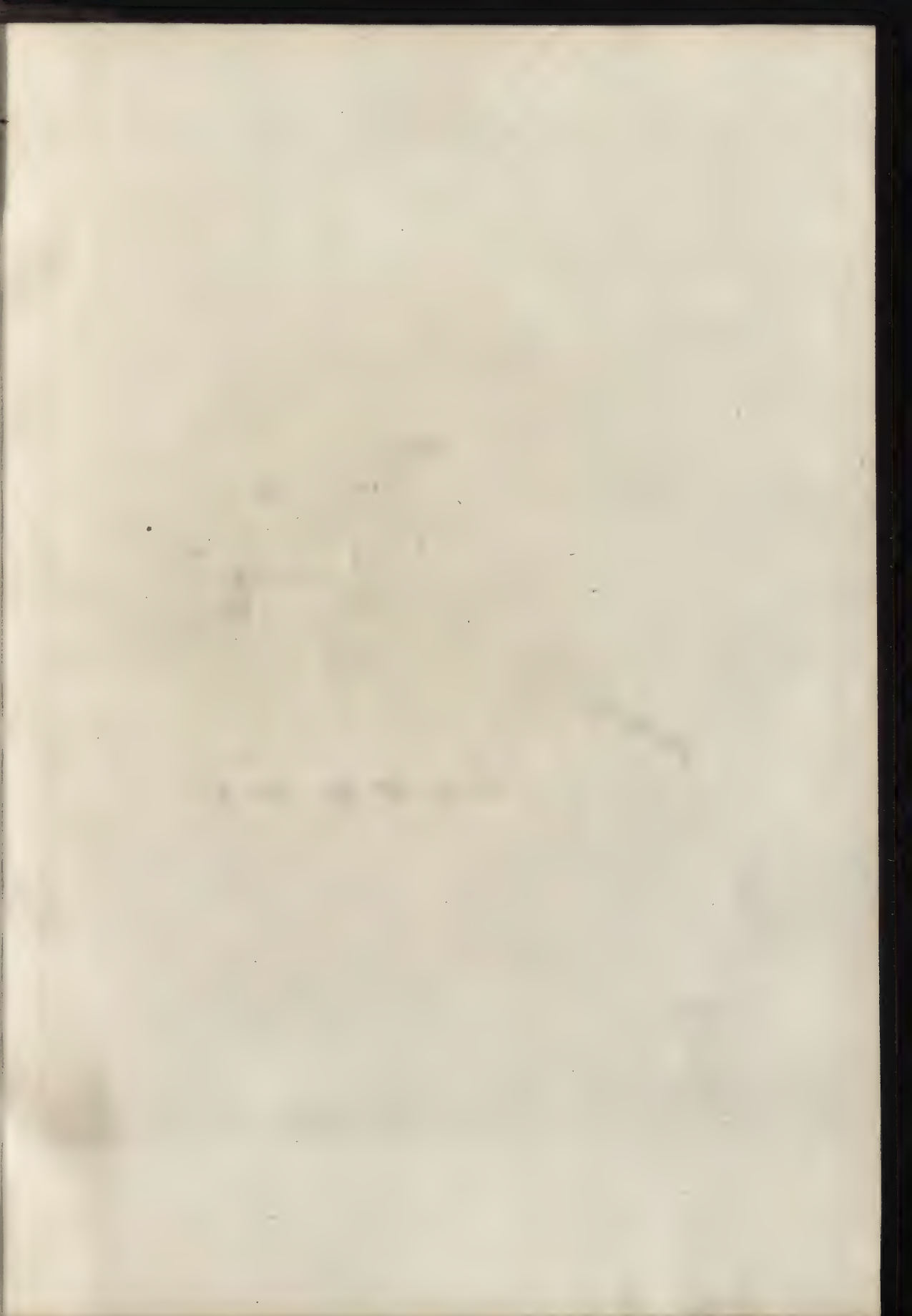
Thre-

Thre noble Barons he slewe there that daye
He fared as he had ben a fyende of hell
As was in earnestte, and not in playe
Fro theyr horses many knyghtes he fell
And breke theyr armes as the bokes do tell
For he trewe so grefelye and soore
That they knewe nother wo nor well
On stedes myght they ryde never more.

All that he mette, he them down threwe
Yonge nor olde he spared none
For pittye had he no more than a Jue
That daye he hurte there many a one
And lyke a boore at the mouth he dyd fome
He fought and stroke all while that he was able
In peace he woulde not haue them to stande alone
He loued murderers that were euer vengeable.

To kyll and slea was all hys delyght
Tenne noble stedes backes he dyd brust
When that he at theyr masters dyd smyte
Or with hys speare at them dyd thrust
To fight euer more and more he had lust
For all hys pleasure was in deathe sett
And euer he cryed who wyll more iuste
The deuyll was in hym no man myght hym lette.

And





And whan hys father sawe howe in vengeance
He was sett, and woulde no sad wayes take
In hys thought he toke greate greuance
And bade that all the knyghtes shoulde departe
Eche theyr waye, and no more justes to make
Than Robert woulde not obey the commaundement
Of hys father, but sayd sorowe shoulde awake
For then in myscheif he sett all hys entente.

He woulde not go fro the battaylle
But hue and flewe on every syde
The stronge knyghtes there he dyd assaylle
All the people fledde, they durst not abyde
The knyghtes all awaye dyde tyde
With lordes and Ladyes euerychone
Robert loughe whan he that spyed
Than thought he I will no more go home.

Than Robert rode into the countrey
And robbed and kylled many a one
Maydens and wyues he rauyshed pytteouslye
He pulled downe abbeyes and houses of stone
For all the Churches that he dyd by come
Thorowe that countrey of Normandye
By hys wyll there shoulde stande none
For all hys pleasure was in murder and robberye.

C

He

He brente houses and slewe yonge chyldren
 Death vpon death was all hys lyfe
 The countrey complayned to hys father
 Howe theyr seruantes were slayne with Robertes
 Some sayde he hathe rauyshed my wyfe [knyfe
 And by oure doughters he hathe layne
 They prayed the Duke to stynte that stryfe
 Or to flee that lande they would full fayne.

The Duke wepte and sayde alas
 That euer I hym begate on woman
 My prayer vnto Jesu euer was
 For to sende me a chylde for I had none
 And nowe gode hath sente me one
 That maketh me full heauy and sad
 The Duches wayled and made great mone
 That from her mynde she was nye madde.

The Duke made hys seruantes to ryde
 To seke Robert in Cyttie and in towne
 Good watche was layde on euery fyde
 On holte and heath in fylde and towne
 And in euery place that they dyd come
 The countrey Robert dyd curse and blame
 And prayed that he myght haue an yll death soone
 For he the ordre of knyghthode dothe shame.

With

Roberte the Deuyll.

19

With Robert at the last these men mette
They sayde that he shoulde with them them goo
All aboute Robert shortlye they sette
One asked hym what he woulde doo
Wylt thou go with vs, he sayde noo
And drewe hys sworde and with them dyd fyght
Full greate woundes he gaue one or twoo
And all the resydue he put to flyght.

And all that he toke he put theyr eyes oute
So bade them go seeke theyr way home
And serued them all so withoute doute
These poore men they made greate mone
So Robert departed and lefte them alone
And sayde tell my father that yt ys for hys sake
Then these men in tyme to the courte came home
And shewed what mastryes Robert dyd make.

Thys good Duke in hearte was right wo
When he sawe hys menues eyes oute
Fore angre he wyft not what to do
But commaunded all the courte aboute
Countables and bayllifes with all theyr route
All men to take hym who so maye
And in pryson to put hym without doute
He charged all men good watche to laye.

C 2

So

So when Robert knewe of thys warke
 He gathered a great companye theues yll
 He gate hym into a forrest full darke
 Where yt was farre from boroughe or hyll
 There he lyued and all dyd he kyll
 That he myght fe in the heath so playne
 Corne and fruites all dyd he spyll
 In doynge myscheif allwaye was he fayne.

Yt was hys pleasure to eate fleshe on the frydaye
 A dogge dyd faste as well as he
 Poore pylgrymes he kylled goynge by the waye
 And holy hermytes that lyued deuoutlye
 So on a daye he rose vppe earlye
 And in the forrest seuen hermytes he founde
 Before a crosse knelynge on theyr knee
 Of theyr prayers to heauen wente the sounde.

What holy whorefones he sayde be youe
 That gapeth vpwardes after the moone
 If ye be a thrust ye shall drynke nowe
 And oute he drewe hys swearde full soone
 The hermytes wyft no what to done
 But suffered death for Jesus sake [runne
 So throughe one of theyr bōdyes hys sworde dyd
 For feare all the other dyd tremble and quake.

Than





Roberte the Deuyll.

21

Than he strake of theyr heades all
And reioysed at that peryllouse dede
In scorne he sayde, syrs do youe fall
Patter and praye ye in youre crede
Full faste these holy men dyd blede
That Robertes clothes were readde as vermulon
With hys sworde he thought further to spede
In vengeaunce he rought not where he become.

Lo thys caytiffe was blynde and myght not see
The cloudes had in clypped the Sunne of grace
Lyke to an apple that the core dost putryfie
The darke mystes of uice smote hym in the face
He was none of the shepe of Israel but the kyd of
He exyled pittye as dyd cruel Kynge Pharao [golyas
Heaped full of synne, as euer he was
That slewe hys own mother, men called hym Nero.

Then he leste these seuē hermytes deadde
And rode oute of the wodde lyke a wylde dragon
So lyke a bore he threwe vp hys headde
The bloude of the hermytes couered all hys gowne
A shepherde he sawe and rode to hym soone
But whan the herdes man dyd hym espye
Yt was no hede to bydde hym begone
He ranne hys waye then for feare dyd he crye.

At

At the laste he the shepherde ouertoke in faye
 And asked what tydynges that he woulde tell
 The shepherd agayne to hym dyd faye [hell
 I was of youe afrayde I wende ye had come oute of
 And as for tydynges, here ys darkenes castell
 There lyeth the Duches of Normandye
 With many a lorde of her counsell
 Of all thys greate lande the royalltye.

So Robert came to the towne there the castell
 The people sawe one ryde as he had ben madde [stode
 With a sworde in hande, and all arayed in bloude
 To runne in to house euery man was gladde
 At the last Robert began to waxe sadde
 And sayde alas that euer he was borne
 In murder and myschief my lyfe haue I ladde
 Hys heere of hys heade he thought to haue torne.

Than he was a bashed foore in hys mode
 Whan that the people woulde hym not abyde
 What yt mente than he vnderstode
 Euery body them felse from hym dyd hyde
 Than to the Castle gate Robert dyd ryde
 Ayd fayne with some body he woulde speake
 But whan any man hym espyede
 They ranne awaye as they dyd in the streete.

Than

Roberte the Deuill.

23

Than with a heauy hearte downe dyd he lyght
And went streyght into the Castell hall
But when the people of hym had a sight
None durst hym byde there at all
Many for helpe dyd crye and calle
Hys mother sawe hym as she sate at meate
For feare she beganne to fall
And hasted her awaye for to gette.

And when he sawe hys mother goynge
He sayde alas Lady mother speake with me
Hys hearte for forowe braft in weepyng
Whan he sawe her from hym so flee
And sayde to hys mother full pitteouslye
Lady tell me howe that I was borne
That I haue ledde my lyfe so mischeuouslye
In the tempests of uice with many a greate storme.

Hys mother all unto hym tolde
Howe she gave hym to the fende both soule and bodye
And he asked her howe she durste be so bolde
To gyue hym from god allmightye
I knowe he sayd that I haue lyued synfullye
As euer dyd the emperoure greate Nero
Amende I wyll and for mercye crye
My dedes will I bewaylle wherfoeuer I go.

Hys

Hys mother prayed hym to smyte of her headde
 For the trespase she sayde, that I dyd to thee
 I am worthy therefore for to be deadde
 To god I offended also in obstynacye
 Sleame she sayde, and I forgiue yt thee,
 He sayde, Mother I wyll not do so
 I had leuer be beaten full bytterlye
 And on my feate to the worldes ende to go.

Than for woo Robert fell to the grounde
 And a greate whyle there he so laye
 There sodenlye he rose in that stounde
 And saide Mother nowe I go my waye
 To Rome wyll I hye as fast as I maye
 And prayed her to commende hym to hys father dere
 So he desyred them all for hym to praye
 And went forth with a full pytteous chere.

So shortly Robert toke hys horse and rode
 Streight vnto the Forrest to hys companye
 Than the Duches that in the Castle abode
 Shryked full sore with a full pytteous crye
 And saide alas lorde to synfull am I
 All women beware, curse neuer your chylde
 And yf that ye do, then be youe in jeopardye
 Also in myscheyff they shalbe desyelde.

Wyth





Wyth that the Duke came into the chaumber
And asked her why she dyd wepe and wayle
She sayde Robert youre sonne hath ben here [sayle
And shewed how that he wolde to Rome without
Ah, sayde the Duke, I feare yt wyll lyttell auayle
He is not able to make restytucion
Alacke sayd the Duke yet am I gladde fauns sayle
That he ys wyllinge to make hys confession.

Nowe ys Robert come to the forrest agayne
And founde hys men all at dyner syttyng
To conuerte them to goodnes he would full fayne
And sayde my felowes, with pytteous lamentyng
Let vs remember oure synfull lyuynge
And aske god mercy with greate repentaunce
Yf we leade thys lyfe styll, yt will vs brynge
To hell withoute ende, with horrible vengeaunce.

Let vs remember he saide our synfull lyfe
We haue murdered people full cruellye
Rauyshed maydens and many a wyfe
Slayne prystes and hermytes full pytteouslye
And abbeys haue ben dystroyed through our robbery
With Nunnes, Ankers, take yt in remembraunce
Howe we put them in ieopardie
Wherfore I dreade hell, with horrible vengeaunce.

D

Houses

Houfes we haue brentte many a one
 And spylte of chyl dren much precyous bloude
 Compassion there, nor pyttye had we none
 In myscheyff we delyted, and neuer in good
 And nowe let vs remember hym that dyed on the rode
 That from vs yet hath kept hys sworde by sufferaunce
 For and we nowe in deathes daunce stode
 To hell shoulde we go, with horrible vengeaunce.

One sayde Robert, what be youe there
 And stode up and began hym to skorne
 Will youe see fellowes : the fox wylbe an anker
 What master, ye be as wyse as a shepe newe shorne
 I trowe youre buttocke be prycked with a thorne
 For your wytt ys oute of temperaunce
 I woulde not haue thys tearme aboute borne
 That we shoulde to hell go with horrible venge-
 [aunce.

Another thefe saide master Roberte, harke
 To preache to vs yt ys all in vayne
 And what I saye, I praye you yt marke
 Thys lyfe wyll we leade in wordes playne
 Euer yet in these workes we haue be fayne
 For our synne we entende not to do pennaunce
 We wyll not forsake thoughe ye stryue vs agayne
 To hell woulde we rather go with horrible vengeaunce.
 Than

Roberte the Deuyll.

27

Than Roberte sawe that they woulde not amende
But in myscheyf there to lyue styll
And to the poore men they wyll ofte offende
Thus then he conspyred in hys wyll
One after another for to kyll
To make short he kyllled them euerychone
He sayde ye haue be readye euer to do euyll
Therefore alyue wyll I not leaue one.

He tolde them a good seruaunte must haue good
Nowe do I paye youe after your deseruyng [wages
There dead in the floore all theyr bodyes sprayles
Robert shutt the doore and they laye within
And sayde of myscheyf this ys the endyng
So he thought to sett the houle on fyre
But he dyd not, he yede a waye sighyng
And sayd alas I haue payde my men theyr hyre.

Than Robert toke hys horse and blessed hym
So throughe the forrest he toke the waye
Ouer hylles and downes fast rydyng
Thus rode he styll all a longe daye
And ofte for synne he cryed well awaye
Than of an abbaye he had a fight
Whiche ofte he had robbed in good faye
Alas saide Robert there will I lodge to nyght.

D 2

For

For faulte of meate then he hongred fore
 And sayde to eate fayne I wolde haue some
 Alacke nowe that euer I was bore
 And when the monkes dyd se hym come
 Eche man hys waye fast dyd ronne
 And saide here cometh the furyous serpent
 Roberte, which ys I trowe a deuyls sonne
 That in murmer and myscheif hath a greate talent.

Than forthe he rode to the churche dore
 And disceded from his horse right there
 So he kneled downe in the floore
 And to oure lorde god he made hys prayer
 Sayinge, swete Jesu that bought me dere
 Haue mercy on me for that precyous bloude.
 That ran from your hearte with longis speare
 Which stonge youe in the side hangynge on the roode.

Then vp he rose and went to the Abbot
 And sayde to hym with pittéous lamentynge
 I haue bene so symple father, that ye well wot
 That nowe I feare the sworde that ys lyghtly comynge
 Of our lordes vengdaunce for my false lyuynge
 And of all that I haue offended vnto youe
 Forgeue me for hys loue that was hangynge [bowed.
 Seuen houres on the crosse and there hys head dyd
 And





Roberte the Deuill.

29

And when they hearde hym pitteouſſye complayne
And in hys harde hearte toke repentaunce
The monckes all thereof were fayne
So there he tolde them all in ſubſtaunce
Howe he was in wyllinge to ſuffer pennaunce
And to Rome to take hys Journeye,
So there he called to hys remembraunce
Of hys lodge and therof toke the abbot the keye.

Thys keye to the Abbot there he toke
And tolde hym that he ſhoulde haue all the treaſure
In the theues lodge yf that he woulde loke
That he had robbed ſynce the fyrſt houre
And ſaide my meynye lyen dead in the floore
The Abbot he prayed to geue hys father the keye
For I wyll not ſlepe one night where I do another
Tyll I in Rome with the pope ſpeke maye.

And praye my father to make reſtytucyon
For me to all them that I dyd offende
I crye hym mercy alſo I am hys ſonne
Hym for to myſcheif alſo I dyd entende
But what thoughe, nowe I truſt to amende
There Robert toke hys leaue of all the hole couent
Hys horſe and hys ſworde he to hys father ſende
And ſo departed and on hys ſeete forth he wente.

Than

Than rode the Abbot to the Duke of Normandye
 And shewed of Robert all that was befall
 There he delyuered vp the keye
 And of hys entente he shewid the Duke all
 Then he hys men before hym dyd call
 And sayde I wyll ryde and restore the goodes agayne
 And euery man hys owne haue shall
 Then were the Dukes seruantes all fayne.

Nowe Robert walked ouer dale and hyll
 By holte and heath, many a wery waye
 He laboured night and daye euer styll
 At the last he came to Rome on Sherethurdaye
 All nyght poorely in the streete he laye
 And on the good frydaye to church he went tywis
 Towardes the quere and nothyng dyd saye
 For that daye the Pope fayed all the seruyce:

The Popes seruantes bade hym go backe
 They smote Robert and thrust hym asyde
 Tho to hym self he sayde, oute alacke
 Yet he thought boldlyer for to abyde
 Where people were thynnest there he espyed
 So prest amonge them tyll he came to the pope
 And fell downe to hys fete and loude there he cryed
 As rayne the teares fell fro hys eyes god wotte.

The

Roberte the Deuyll.

31

The popes seruauntes would haue pulled hym asyde
Oure holy father, yet aunswered naye
Medle not with hym, lett hym abyde
That I maye here what he dothe saye ;
Robert aunswered I am here thys daye
The synfullest lyuer that euer was founde
Synce Adam was made in Canaan of clāye
I am the greatest synner that lyued on grounde.

The pope sayde what art thou good frende
And whye makest thoue thys lamentacon
Oh good father saide Robert to god I haue offended
I desyre youe to heare my confession
Of my greate synnes the abhomynacon
On them to muse yt ys vnnumerable
Vice and I rested all waye in one habytacion
With murder and enery vnthryfte culpable.

Art thou Robert the deuyll sayde the pope than
That ys the worst creature of all the worlde yll
Yee yee syr sayde Robert I am the same man
Greate myscheyf haue I do, and muche yll
As to robbe and slea, both burne and kyll
The pope sayd, here in goddes name I thee warne
By uertue of hys passion stande here styll
Do to me nor my men no maner of harme.

Naye

Naye naye sayde Robert, neuer chrysten man
 Wyll I hurte by night nor daye
 The pope toke hym by the hande than
 And bade hym hys confession to hym saye
 Thereto Robert woulde not saye naye
 But all hys synnes confessed and tolde
 The pope whan he hym hearde dyd quake for fraye
 For to heare hys synnes hys hearte waxed nye colde.

And tolde howe hys mother gaue hym to the seende
 In the houre of hys fyrst contemplacyon [of hell
 The pope sayd Robert I thee tell
 Thou must go to an hermyte three miles withoute the
 Robert sayde with good will thys shalbe done [towne
 Then wente he to the popes goostlye father
 The pope commaunded hym so to done
 That the hermyte might hys confession heare.

In the mornynge Robert walked ouer hyll and dale
 He was full werye of his labourynge
 At the laste he came in to a greate vale
 And founde same hermyte standinge
 Hespake with the hermyte, and shewed of hys lyuynge
 And tolde that he was sente fro the pope of Rome
 But when that holy man hearde hys confession
 He sayed brother ye be right wellcome.

And





And for youre synnes euer youe muste be sorye
 For as yet I will not asfoyle youe
 In a lyttell chappell all nyght shall youe lye
 Do ye as I do youe counsell nowe
 Aske god mercye, and let youre hearte bowe
 For all thys nyght I wyll wake and praye
 Vnto oure lorde, that I maye knowe.
 Yf in saluacion ye do stande in the waye.

So they departed, the hermyte fell on slepe
 An aungell sodenlye to hym dyd appeare
 And saide to Goddes commaundement take good kepe
 And of Robertes pennaunce thou shalt heare,
 He muste counterfeyt a foole in all manere
 The meate that he shall eate, he muste pull yt from
 And neuer to speake, but as he dombe weare [a dogge
 Thys pennaunce done, he shalbe forgeuen of god.

The hermyte with that shortlye dyd awake
 And called Robert, and spaeke to hym [take
 And saide heare nowe the pennaunce that ye shall
 God commaundeth the to counterfet a foole in all
 thinge
 Meate none to eate, withoute a dogge do yt brynge
 To the in hys mouth, then muste thou yt eate
 No worde to speake, but as dombe euer beyng
 With dogges every nyght also thou must sleepe.

E

The

The hermyte said, tyll thy synnes be forgeue
 Thou must do as I haue here sayde
 With thys sharpe pennaunce thou must lyue
 Tyll god of hys debtes by the be payde
 Forget not thys, in thy hearte let it be layde
 At the last god wyll sende the worde agayne
 Robert wepte as thoughe he shoulde haue dyed
 And sayde thys pennaunce will I do full saynt.

The hermyte bade hym remember althyng
 And whan thy synnes be cleane forgeuen the
 By an Aungell god wyll sende the warnyng
 Nowe maye thou no longer byde with me
 Robert blessed the hermyte then trewlye
 So eche toke theyr leaue of other
 Nowe god for euer be wyth the
 He sayd to Robert, nowe farewell brother.

There poore Robert departed fro the hermyth
 And blessed hym and agayne went to Rome
 For to do hys pennaunce in the strete
 And whan that he thether was come
 Lyke as he had ben a foole he dyd ronne
 And lepte and daunced from one syde to another
 Many folke laughed at hym soone
 And wende he had ben a foole, they knew none other.
 Boyes.





Roberte the Deuill.

31

Boyes folowed hym throughe the strete
Castyng styckes and stones at hym
And some with rodde hys bodye dyd beate
The chyldren made greate shoutes and cryenge
Burges of the cyttie at Robert laye laughyng
Oute of theyr wyndowes to se hym playe
The boyes threwe dyrte and myre at hym
Thus contynewed Robert manye a daye.

Thus he played the foole on a season
He came on a tyme to the Emperours Courte
And sawe that the gate stode all open
Robert ranne into the hall and beganne to worke
So daunced and lept and aboute so starte
At the laste the Emperoure had pyttie on hym
Howe he taere hys clothes and gnew hys shyrt
And bade a seruauante meate hym for to brynge:

Thys seruauante brought Robert plentye of meate
So proferde hyt hym and saide go dyne
Robert sate styll he woulde not eate
Yet god wotte hys belly greate pyne
At last the Emperoure sayde yonder ys a hounde of myne
And bade hys seruauante throwe hym a bone
So he dyd, and whan Robert yt had spyne
Alack thought Robert, he shall not eate yt alone.

E 2 *hys own name on* He

He lept from the table and with the dogge faught
 And all for to haue the bone awaye
 The hounde at the last by the fyngers hym caught
 So styll in hys mowthe he kepte hys praye,
 Whan Robert sawe that, downe he laye
 The dogge gnawe the one ende and Robert the other
 The Emperoure laughed whan he that sawe
 And sayde the dogge and he fought harde together.

The Emperoure sawe that he was hongrye
 And bade to throwe the dogge a hole losse
 Whan Robert sawe that he was glad greatlye
 For to lose hys parte he was right lothe,
 And agayne to the dogge he goeth
 So brake the losse a sonder and to the hounde
 He gaue the one halfe to saye the sothe
 And eate the other as the dogge dyd on the grounde.

The Emperoure saide, syth that I was borne
 Sawe I neuer a more foole naturall
 Nor suche an ydeot sawe I neuer beforne
 That had leuer eate that that to the dogge dyd fall
 Rather then that that was proffered hym in the hall
 Than Robert toke hys staffe and smote at forme and
 stile
 What sorowe was in hys hearte they knewe not all
 There men were gladde to see hym playe the foole.

At

At the last Robert went into a garden
 And there he founde a fayre fountayne
 He was a thurst and whan he had dronken
 He wente in to hys dogge agayne
 To folowe hym euer he was fayne
 Thus vnder a stayre at nyght laye the hounde
 And euer hys pennaunce Robert dyd not dysdayne
 Allwaye hys bed was with the dogge on the grounde.

Whan the Emperoure espyed hym lye there
 Fett hym a bed to a man dyd he fayre
 And lett yt be layed for hym under the stayre
 So they dyd and Robert poynted as naye
 And woulde have them to beare the bed awaye
 Then they fett hym an arme full of strawe
 And therupon by hys dogge he laye
 All men marueyled that yt sawe.

Muche myrth and sporte he made euer amonge
 And as the Emperoure was at dyner on a daye
 A Jue fate at the borde, that greate rowme longe
 In that house beare, and was receyued all waye
 Than Roberte hys dogge toke in hys armes in fayre
 And touched the Jue and he ouer hys sholder loked
 backe

Robert set the dogges ars to hys mowth without naye
 Full soore the Emperoure loughed whan he sawe that.

Robert

Robert sawe a bryde that shoulde be maryed
 And soone he toke her by the hande
 So into a foule donge myxen he her caryed
 And in the myre he let her stande
 The Emperoure stode and behelde hym longe
 At the last Robert toke a quyeke Catte
 And ranne into the kechyn amonge the thronge
 And threwe her quyeke into the beefe pott.

Lordes and barons loughe that they coulde not
 To see hym make myrth withoute harme [stande
 They saide he was the meryest in all that lande
 With that a messenger the Emperoure dydwarne
 That aboute rome was many a Sarasyne
 And saide the Seneschall hathe gathered a great armye
 Because ye wyll not let your daughter haue hym
 He purposeth all Rome for to dystroye.

Thys Emperoure had a doughter that coulde not
 The whiche the Seneschall loued as hys lyfe [speake
 And ofte with the Emperoure he dyd treate
 For to haue her vnto hys wyfe
 And for that cause the Seneschall made thys fryfe
 Because the Emperoure in nowise woulde
 Geue hym hys doughter, he swere ofte sythe
 Maugre hys head wyne her he shoulde.

The



Roberte the Deuill.

39

The Emperoure heard of the Sarasyns that were
For to dystroye theyr chrystyan Countrey [come
He made a crye in greate Rome
That younge and olde shoulde make readye
As manye as were betwene systene and syxtye
Lordes barons and knyghtes drewe out of euery cost
With an houghe companye and a myghtye
They thought for to Fell the Sarasyns greate hoste.

So forth withall bothe these hostes mette
Wyth weapons bright and stedes stronge
So with soore strokes together they sette
Theyr speares brasste in peces longe
Many a doughtye was slayne in that thronge
Greate horses stamped in yron wedes
Oure chrysten men were put to the wronge
With woundes depen that full fore bledes.

Oure lorde on hys seruantes had compassion
And sent an Aungell with horse and armure
Vnto Robert as he dranke in the garden
There the Aungell bade hym arme hym sure [dure
And saide bestryde thys good stede that longe will en-
And in all haste go ryde and helpe the Emperoure
Alacke thought Robert nede hath no cure
Than rode he forth the space of an houre.

He

He rode into the thickest of the fyelde
 And huc and slewe of the Sarasyns a greate numbre
 No steele nor harburgyn that with hym helde
 Hys dentes rouges as yt had ben thonder
 He smote mennes bodyes cleane a sonder
 Hys sworde made many a head to blede
 That the Emperoure had greate wonder
 What knyght yt was that he sawe so doughtye in
 [dede.

With the helpe of god and Robert that knyght
 That daye the Sarasyns losse the fyelde
 And whan that ended was that fyght
 Euery man howered and behelde
 Where that whyte knyght was that wepon dyd welde
 But Robert wente into the garden
 And layde downe bothe harnes and shyld
 Yt vanyshed a waye, he wyft not where yt became.

And all thys sawe the Emperours doughter
 That the Aungell brought Robert the whyte stede
 And howe at the welles syde he dyd of all hys armure
 Therof she had greate maruayle in dede
 At the last the Emperours men dyd of theyr wede
 And came to dyner into theyr lordes hall
 The Emperoure said this daye Jesu dyd vs spede
 And the white knyght sayre must hym befall.

Than

Roberte the Deuill.

41

Than Robert came in lyke a foole playinge
Into the hall, and leapte from place to place
The Emperoure was glad to se Robert daunfynge
Than he spyed a great race of bloude in Robertes face
But that he gate when he in the battayle was
The Emperoure wende that hys seruantes had hurt
And saide, there ys some rybaude in this place [hym so
That hath hurte my Robert, that no harm can do.

The Emperoure asked whether that whyte knyght
Hys lordes aunfwered, we can not saye [was gone
At the last hys doughter that was bothe deafe and
Euer she poynted to Robert allwaye [dombe
Her father wondred at her in good faye
And asked her mystres, what hys doughter ment
She said, she meaneth that Robert thys daye [dente.
Holpe youe to wynde the fyeelde with hys doughty.

Her mystres said that Robertes greate bloudye race
Yours doughter meaneth he had it in the fyeelde
At her wordes the Emperoure asshamed was
And waxed angrye and that hys doughter behelde
He saide thys folysh mayde thynketh he fought in the
He bade her mestres teache her more better [fiele
Far and she will not wyser be in her elde
A foole shall she dye, there maye no man let her.

F.

Than.

Than the seconde tyme the Sarafins came to Rome
 And with the Emperoure fought afore fælde
 The Aungell agayne to Robert dyd come
 And then he rode forth hys weapon to welde
 He perished brestplates and many ashylde
 He strooke of bothe legge and arme
 The Emperoure that knyght agayne behelde
 To watche for hym hys men he dyd warne.

But he was gone they wyft not whether
 So on the morowe an other fælde was pyght
 The Emperoure charged euery man to do his endeuer
 For to haue knowen that whyte knyght
 So on the morowe that they shoulde fyght
 Syxe knyghtes laye in a woode preuelye and styll
 They sayde we wyll of that noble man haue a fight
 And to our lorde brynge hym we wyll.

On the morowe the sunne shone bright
 Bothe partyes there was assembled
 All the fælde gaue a greate lyght
 Of the gleyues that glyftred, the stedes trembled
 A wonder to heare the brydles that gyngled
 With arbelaters they shot many a quarell
 All the grounde of the noyse rombled [well.
 Throughe the helpe of Robert the Chrysten men sped
 That

That daye Robert proued hym doughtye of hande
 Manye fro theyr horsen downe he dyd fhlynge
 None was able hys dente for to with stande
 There men myght heare greate rappes ryng
 The noyse of gunnes made such a bellowyng
 All the fælde sowned as yt had ben thonder
 Of bloude greate gutters they myght se runnyng
 And many a knyghtes head cleft a sonder.

All Sarafyns fled, the chryften won the fælde
 Robert rode awaye than full pryuelye
 The knyghtes in the wodde hym behelde
 And lowde vnto hym beganne to crye
 Syr knyght speake with vs for thy courtesye
 Robert thought not agayne to turne
 The other knyghtes rode after hastelye [runne:
 And smote theyr horsen with spores and after dyd

Roberte ranne ouer dale and hyll
 Hys stede was good that he had there
 A bolde knyght folowed after hym styll
 And into the reste he threwe hys speare
 So strongelye to Robert he hyt beare
 To haue slayne hys horse, and smote hym in the thye
 The speare head braft, and in hys legge bode there
 Than was thys gentle knyght full soorye.

Backe agayne rode than thys knyght so bolde
And shewed the Emperoure that he was gone agayne
There of hys speare heade he hym tolde
To see hym quod the Emperoure I woulde full fayne
Than throughe all hys lande he dyd proclayne
That he that woulde shewe the greate wounde with
the speare head
Shoulde haue hys doughter, and not her layne
Vnto hys wyfe her for to wedde.

When the Seneschall hearde the proclamacion
He made hymself a greate wounde throughe the thyne
So gate a speare and whyte armoure soone
And so rode to the Emperoure with all hys meynye
And said Syr Emperoure that valyaunt knyght am I
That faued youe thre tymes fro grame
The Emperoure said to hym, thou art not lykelye
And bade hym holde hys peace for shame

At last the Seneschall shewed hym hys wounde
And said, beholde thys and the head of the speare
The Emperoure was abashed in that ffounde
So there he gaue the Seneschall hys doughter
And on the morowe he shoulde be maryed vnto her
So was the Emperoure by hym beguyled
He wende verelye that he had ben there
And fought in the felde as a knyght doughted.

On

THE HISTORY OF THE





Roberte the Deuill.

45

On the morowe thys greate weddyng shoulde be
That the Seneschall shoulde haue hys doughter
And so brought her to churche, the seruyce began
There by myrakle thys lady spake to her father [ready
And saide thys traytoure he hath beguyled youe here
For Robert was he that helpe you in the fylde
I sawe an Aungell brynge hym bothe shyld and speare
With these two wordes downe on her knees she kneled.

And the Emperoure whan he sawe hys daughter
For ioye he was nere oute of hys mynde [speake
And thanked god for that myracle greate
Than the Seneschall with shame shranke behynde
So to the Pope the Emperoure dyd wynde
The mayde tolde the Pope what Robert had done
And brought them to the welle the speare head to fynde
And betwene two stones she espyed yt sone.

[greate

Than went to seke Robert bothe lordes and ladyes
At the laste they founde hym lye vnder the stayre
Amonge the dogges and with them dydde eate
They desyred hym to speake with wordes fayre
But he made signes as he coulde not heare
With that came an hermyte & toke hym by the sleue
Sent thether by god he was hys goostlye father
And bade hym speake, sayinge hys synnes were forgate.

Yet

Yet was he afearde to speake, and durst not
 The Emperoure prayed hym to se hys thye
 Robert woulde not heare, but whan he sawe the Pope
 He ranne and played hys tauntes about lyghtlye
 The pope bade hym speake for the loue of Marye
 Robert hym scorned and gaue hym hys bleffynge
 He woulde not breake hys pennaunce, he had leuer dye
 Then the hermyte bade hym speake, forgeuen is thy
 [synne.

With that Robert fell downe on hys knee
 And thanked Jesu that forgaue hym hys myflyuyng
 The pope and the Emperoure were glad trewlye
 But most of all that ladye made reioysfynge
 That was the Emperours doughter that yongelynge
 Desyrynge her father that she myght Robert wedde
 For thy askynge said he, I gyue the my bleffynge
 In all the haste daughter yt shalbe spedde.

Than Robert maryed the Emperours doughter
 A feast was holde of great solempnytie
 Eche of them were full gladde of other
 And at the last when ended was thys ryaltie
 He toke leaue of the Emperoure and to hys owne
 He yede for the imp hys father was dead [countrey
 Also a false knyght put hys mother in greate ieopardye
 Whych Robert at the laste hyng by the headde.

With

Roberte the Deyll.

47

With hys mother he mette in the cyttye of Rome
The Duches was then glad and blythe
That Robert her sonne so vertuous was come home
Whiche in hys youthe lyued so myscheuous a lyfe
Than all men loued hym, both mayde and wyfe
Tyll it befell vpon a certayne daye
A messenger came from the Emperoure full swythe
And prayed hym to come to Rome in all the hast he
maye

He tolde that the Seneschall had greate warre
With hys lorde the Emperoure in dede
Robert sent after men nye and farre
In all the haste thether he gan spede
But ere he came was done a myscheuous dede
The Seneschall the Emperoure had slayne
For sorowe Robertes hearte dyd blede
In fyeelde he woulde haue fought full fayne.

The Seneschall hearde that Robert was come
And purposed for to mete hym in the fyeelde
He reared up many a black Sarafon
With wepon stronge bothe speare and shayelde
So ether partyes other behelde
And fought together a greate batteyll
There Robert with hys handes the Seneschall kyld
So to hys countrey returned without fayle.

And

And whan he came agayne to Normandye
 He dreade euer god and kepte hys lawe
 So lyued he full deuoutelye
 For all thyng woulde he do vnder awe
 And punyshe Rebelles both hange and drawe
 Than was he called the seruaunte of god
 No thefe woulde he faue that he myght knowe
 For dreade of goddes righteoufnes the sharpe rodde.

One chylde by the Emperours daughter he had
 That was a knyght with Kinge charles of Fraunce
 In manfull dedes he hys lyfe ladde
 Doughty he was bothe with speare and launce
 Lo, thy Robert ended hys lyfe in pennaunce
 And whan he dyed hys soule went to heauen hye
 Nowe all men beare these in remembraunce
 He that lyueth well here, no euyl death shall dye.

Yonge and olde that delyteth to reade in storye
 Yt shall youe styrre to uertuous lyuyng
 And cause some to haue theyr memorye
 Of the paynes of hell; that ys euer duryng
 By readyng bookes men knowe all thyng
 That euer was done, and hereafter shall be
 Idlenes to myscheif many a one doth bryng
 And specyally as we daylye may see.

Take

Robert the Deuyll.

49

Take youe ensample of thys story olde
Howe that he in youth dyd greate vengeaunce
In doyng myscheife he was euer bolde
Tyll god sent to hym good remembraunce
And after that he toke fuche repentaunce
That he was called the seruante of god by name
And so contynewed without varyaunce
God geue vs grace that we may do the same.

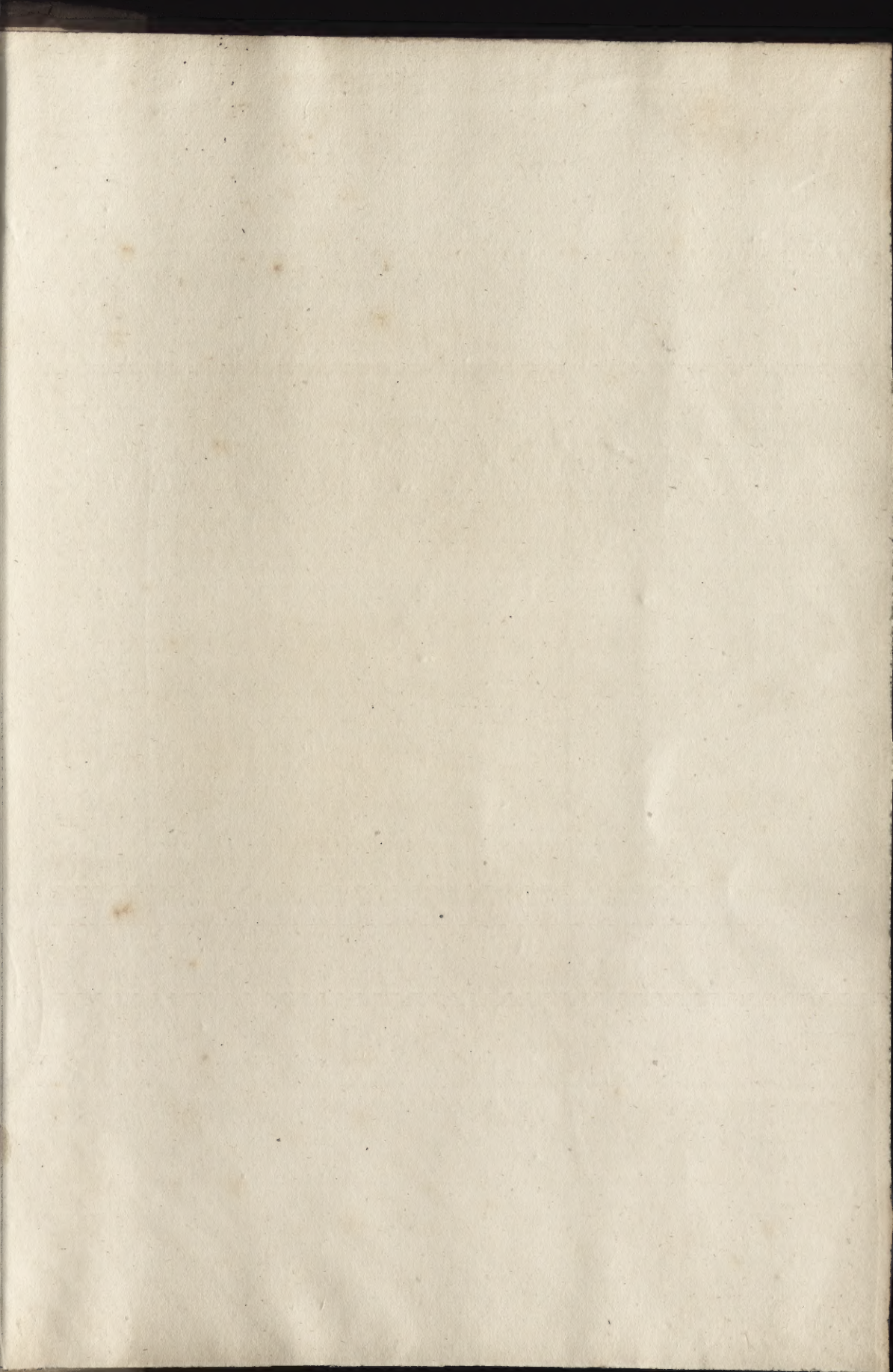
**Here endeth the lyfe of
Robert the Deuyll.**



THE HISTORY OF THE

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HAROLD GODWINSON
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